



INSPIRE
BELIEVE
ACHIEVE

The Oaks Academy Newsletter October 2024

Headteachers Update



We are delighted to welcome new families and children into our school community in Year 7 or starting in other year groups. We have made a great start to the new term and enjoyed welcoming lots of new staff and pupils to our school. We continue to go from strength to strength following our 'Good' Ofsted grading in April 2024. Over the past 3 to 4 years our pupil numbers have grown by 70% and we have welcomed many more additional specialist staff. We continue on our journey to excellence, and are delighted with the commitment we see from our pupils in terms of positive behaviours, attendance and their learning.

We continue apace with our site improvements - in particular, this summer has seen a new computer suite, canteen and kitchen improvements, new classrooms, LED lighting throughout the school, more bike racks and an allotment area created for the STEM club.

GCSE results this summer were the best in the school's history. We are immensely proud of these achievements and they reflect much hard work and effort by the pupils and staff. We pride ourselves in the fact that more pupils have chosen the English Baccalaureate route than nationally, meaning they have studied challenging GCSEs, including a Modern Foreign Language. Our results over recent

years exemplify our drive to deliver the highest possible standards and outcomes for young people in the local community. We want our pupils to take pride in what they have accomplished.

We were delighted to welcome lots of new prospective parents and children to our Open Day in September and we fully expect the school to be oversubscribed again in Year 7. Thank you as ever for your ongoing support and commitment.

Peter Kingdom

Headteacher

Whole School Focus: Supporting Your Child at Home with Reading

Reading With Your Child

Reading to and with your child regularly - ideally every evening for at least fifteen minutes - can make a dramatic difference to a child's achievement within school. A report from the Oxford University Press highlights the importance of parents reading with their children thus: 'Children who read outside of class are 13 times more likely to read above the expected level for their age'. Furthermore, pupils who spend time reading outside of school achieve better grades at GCSE and are more confident with the demands of college, university and the world of work.

The report also offers six tips for reading with your child at home:

- Make time to read to your child for fifteen minutes a day
- Choose a variety of fictional and non-fictional books to read
- Take turns reading with your child
- Talk about the book - stop at several points in the story and ask your child what he/she thinks will happen next
- Pay attention to the language and encourage your child to use a dictionary or the internet to check the definition of words they may not understand
- Enjoy reading

All pupils in Years 7 and 8 have extra time on their timetable for reading lessons. The school would very much appreciate your support in ensuring that your child is engaging with reading at home. Please make time in the evening for your child to read a suitable book with you.

The following websites allow you to access free audiobooks:

- <https://librivox.org/>
- <https://etc.usf.edu/lit2go/>
- <http://www.loyalbooks.com/>
- <https://www.openculture.com/freeaudiobooks>
- <https://www.overdrive.com/>
- <https://www.storynory.com/>
- <https://freeclassicaudiobooks.com/>
- <https://www.digitalbook.io/>

Thank you for your support.

Academic Literacy Interventions

As a school we have introduced Accelerated Reader to our Year 7s and Year 8s. It is an exciting reading programme used nationally to encourage students to read while also challenging them to improve their comprehension skills and read challenging books. Students take a reading test which gives each student a guide to the level of book they should be reading. They then read the book, and once finished take a quiz on what happened in the story: if they pass they gain points which at The Oaks Academy means prizes! To support your child to meet their reading goals you can ask them what they are currently reading and talk about what has happened in the story so far. You can also encourage them to come to The Oaks Learning Resource Centre regularly to borrow books at the right level for them.

We have introduced Bedrock (the award winning literacy resource for schools - <https://bedrocklearning.org>) for all Year 7 and Year 8. Bedrock is a software programme which is proven to improve students' literacy levels. It works on areas such as word meaning and grammar. When students first use the software, they are assessed for their level, and then the programme automatically adapts to be at the right level of challenge. This means that students in the same class will be seeing different questions depending on their own personal ability. This ensures that each student is allowed to progress at their own pace and their progression is monitored. All students in Year 7 and Year 8 are expected to complete at least 30 minutes a week using Bedrock. Please ensure your child to use Bedrock at home as this will really support their literacy levels.

E-Library

We are also pleased to let you know that we now have our own e-library. Students will be able to access and borrow e-books from home to read on any electronic device using their school log in information. The link is below: happy reading!

- <https://oaksacademy.eplatform.co.uk>

J. MacKreth-Aylett

Deputy Headteacher - Quality of Education



Faculty Focus: English

This year, English have introduced a brand new element to the curriculum for Years 7 and 8: Reading Fluency.

Fluent reading supports reading comprehension. When students read fluently, their thinking resources can be redirected from focusing on interpreting and onto comprehending the text. For this reason, fluency is sometimes described as a bridge from word recognition to comprehension.

This curriculum is designed specifically to support students reading fluency, which is defined as reading with accuracy (reading words correctly), automaticity (reading words at an appropriate speed without great effort) and prosody (appropriate stress and intonation). These three key elements of fluency are important skills in isolation, but they also work as interdependent building blocks. If one building block isn't secure, then reading fluency is difficult to achieve.

In lessons, students will be tasked with reading different texts in different ways, such as echo reading, choral reading and paired reading: each of these reading styles can then be assessed by a partner using the fluency rubric below.

How can you help at home?

When your child reads at home, ask them to read out loud to you - then you can use the fluency rubric below to assess how fluently they read. Remember, the more they read out loud, the more fluent they will become.

English Speaking Board

Another element to the English Literacy Curriculum is specifically designed for Year 7 - the English Speaking Board.

This is an exciting qualification offered to Year 7 students and this element of the curriculum is specifically designed to improve students' speaking and listening skills, beginning to provide them with the oracy skills necessary to succeed in the modern world of work.




Students will complete 3 tasks during the academic year:

- A four minute talk
- A 200 word reading of a novel that includes dialogue
- A poem recited from memory

Every year, this gives students the opportunity to tell their class something interesting about themselves, something we would never expect. Last year we learned what Moko Jumbie was and learned that one of our students was amazing at it. What will we learn this year?

M. Barlow

Curriculum Team Leader - English Faculty

| Student-Friendly Fluency Rubric | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| | 1 HELP! | 2 I'm working on it | 3 Almost there | 4 WOW! |
|  <p>Expression and Volume</p> | <p>"I don't have any expression. "My voice is too quiet. "My reading does not sound natural. "I may sound like a robot.</p> | <p>"I have some expression. "I am quiet but I get louder on some parts. "I sound more natural on parts of my reading. "It is starting to sound more like talking to a friend.</p> | <p>"Most of my reading is with expression. "I try to read loud enough. "I am trying to emphasize certain words and phrases. "Most of the time it sounds like I am talking to a friend.</p> | <p>"I read with expression all the time. "My volume is varied and matches what I am reading. "I know which words and phrases to emphasize and it helps my understanding. "I sound like I could be a teacher reading out loud to the class.</p> |
|  <p>Phrasing and Punctuation</p> | <p>"I read word-by-word. "I don't pay attention to punctuation</p> | <p>"I read in 2 or 3 word phrases but some of my reading is still word-by-word. "I don't really pay attention to punctuation</p> | <p>"I mostly read in longer phrases but still have some short phrases. "I pay attention to the punctuation but still make mistakes.</p> | <p>"I read in longer phrases. "Punctuation really helps me to break my phrases up so they make sense.</p> |
|  <p>Rate and Smoothness</p> | <p>"I struggle through many of the words. "I have to stop and decode most of the words I am reading. "It takes me a long time to read.</p> | <p>"I know many of the sight words. "I still make many decoding stops and I have many "rough spots". "I still pause and repeat too often.</p> | <p>"I know most of the sight words. "I still have trouble with specific words and I have to slow down. "I might take a few pauses or have to repeat a few times.</p> | <p>"I know my sight words and I can decode on the go. "I self correct on difficult words using the word and/or sentence structure. "I only pause or repeat if it make sense in the story.</p> |

BY THE END OF THE YEAR YOU WILL HAVE COMPLETED:

1. A four-minute **talk**

- Content
- Style
- Voice/speech
- Structure
- Visual aids



2. A **200 word reading** from a novel of your choice that includes dialogue

- Choice of book
- Introduction
- Style
- Voice/delivery
- Communication



3. A **poem** recited from memory

- Introduction
- Memory
- Voice/delivery
- Choice and interpretation



Power pose!

Take 10 seconds to think about how you would stand when you need to demonstrate confidence.

I will ask you independently strike a power pose!

ESB Prepare for Learning

Consider how you need to stand when presenting your talk.

How do you show confidence and enthusiasm through your body?

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

The image is a promotional poster for a workshop. It features a blue background with white and red text. At the top left, it says "Power pose!". Below that, it instructs students to take 10 seconds to think about their stance for confidence. A central image shows a person in a power pose on a stage. To the right, there is a red circular logo for "ESB Prepare for Learning". At the bottom, there are two questions: "Consider how you need to stand when presenting your talk." and "How do you show confidence and enthusiasm through your body?". The Oxford University Press logo is in the bottom left corner.

Year 11 Study Skills Workshop and GCSE Information Evening

On Thursday 3rd October 2024 our Year 11 students took part in a highly engaging and productive Study Skills and How To Revise Workshop, delivered by the expert team from Positively You. This invaluable session was organised by our Deputy Headteacher of Progress and Culture, Mr Newham, as part of our ongoing efforts to support our students in their preparation for their GCSEs.

The workshop focused on providing students with practical strategies to enhance their study habits, improve memory retention and organise their revision effectively. Students were introduced to various techniques for remembering key facts, managing their time and approaching revision in a way that reduces stress while boosting productivity. Mr Newham commented on the success of the event stating 'All the students were fully engaged throughout the session and it was fantastic to see them learning techniques that will be incredibly useful as they prepare for their exams'.

Our GCSE Information Evening on Thursday 3rd October was well-attended by both parents and students. The event provided vital information to help guide and support our Year 11 students through their GCSE year. The evening included several key presentations and workshops aimed at equipping both students and their families with the tools they need for success. Highlights from the event included:

- Revision Strategies Workshop: external provider 'Positively You' delivered an interactive workshop offering effective revision techniques that parents can use to support their children at home
- Deputy Headteacher for Progress and Culture Presentation: Mr Newham outlined key dates for the academic year, including the exam schedule and an overview of the intervention timeline to ensure all students are supported in their progress
- Assistant Headteacher for Community and Personal Development: Mrs Abberley provided an insightful talk on next steps after GCSEs, exploring options such as college, apprenticeships and employment, helping parents and students to begin planning for the future
- Curriculum Leaders from Maths and English shared specific advice on how parents can assist their children in these crucial subjects, highlighting resources and strategies for effective learning

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to all parents and carers who attended the event, making it a productive and informative evening. Your support is invaluable as we work together to ensure our students are fully prepared for their GCSEs and the future beyond.

J. Newham

Deputy Headteacher - Progress and Culture





Careers

Crewe and Nantwich Careers Fair

On Thursday 3rd October our Year 10 students visited the Crewe and Nantwich careers fair at Cheshire College South and West. This was a great opportunity for students to explore a variety of career paths, connect with industry professionals, and gain valuable insights into the working world. The fair featured a wide range of industries, from healthcare and technology to arts and engineering. Students had the chance to discover careers they may not have previously considered.

Post-16 Open Evenings

Over the coming months we encourage all our Year 10 and Year 11 students to attend the local post-16 college and sixth form open evenings. College open evenings are invaluable opportunities for students and their families to explore higher education options. Attending these events can significantly influence a student's decision making process and future educational journey.

Some of the upcoming post-16 open evenings are:

Cheshire College South and West

- <https://www.ccsw.ac.uk/events/open-evening-13-november/>

Malbank School and Sixth Form College

- <https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=FqNhYSvmnUOhS5YcTJIJfSP2YEjbHHxEqI8kapsHg2RUMTRFQ0xVU1VSVEdCV0MxUzJLMFIOUEIUMi4u&route=shorturl>

Sandbach School Sixth Form

- <https://sixthform.sandbachschool.org/>

Sir John Deane's Sixth Form College

- <https://www.sjd.ac.uk/>

Brine Leas School

- <http://brineleas.co.uk/bl6-sixth-form/>

E. Abberley

Assistant Headteacher - Community and Personal Development

Enrichment Half Term 1

As we dive into the next exciting half term we're thrilled to share a variety of enrichment activities that have already taken place designed to inspire creativity, foster teamwork and enhance learning outside the classroom. These activities provide our students with opportunities to explore new interests, develop skills and engage with their peers in meaningful ways. We encourage all students who have the opportunity to participate to join in with these enriching activities to broaden their horizons and create lasting memories. Let's make this term an unforgettable experience filled with learning, creativity and fun!

E. Abberley

Assistant Headteacher - Community and Personal Development

The Anne Frank Trust Winner

Last academic year a group of Year 9 students met with the Anne Frank Trust to discuss the Holocaust and 20th Century European antisemitism and discrimination. Students from The Oaks Academy who attended this session were given the opportunity to apply for a role as an Anne Frank Ambassador. This was very competitive and required students to write a letter of application to the Anne Frank Trust for consideration.

The Oaks Academy was delighted to hear that our very own Millie C, now in Year 10, has been accepted for this project and will be working closely with the Anne Frank Trust on a very exciting experience. A huge congratulations is in order – what an achievement Millie has accomplished!

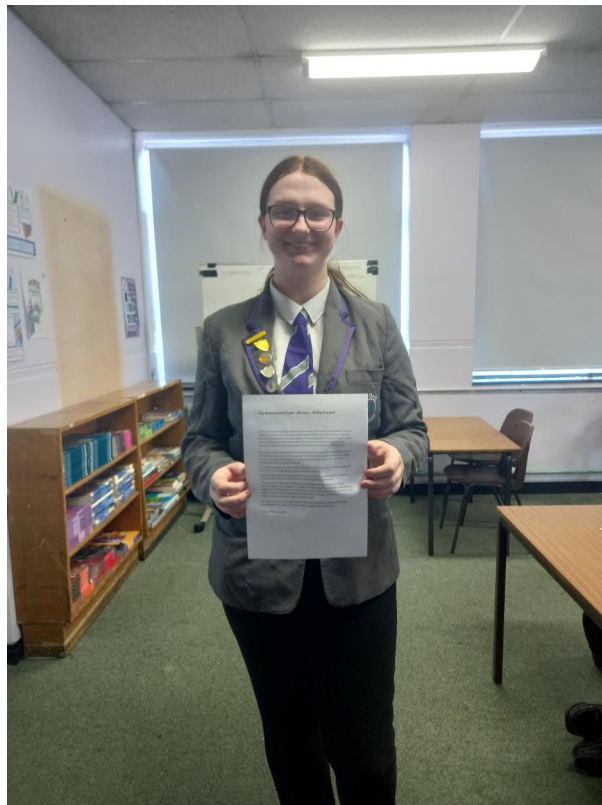
In her letter of application Millie showed a commitment and passion for developing her role and voice in challenging prejudice and discrimination.

Millie will receive personal mentoring from Amber Allcock, a professional member of the organisation, who will assist Millie in becoming a new ambassador. Millie will also be receiving a certificate of participation for her efforts and will be attending regular training sessions to pass her newly acquired knowledge to other students in The Oaks Academy. As well as this, new ambassadors get the opportunity to travel to Poland and see firsthand the history of the holocaust and antisemitism in Eastern Europe to increase student cultural capital.

Mr. Jessup and the Humanities staff wish Millie good luck on her journey and would like to thank her for her commitment, engagement and passion.

B. Jessup

History Teacher



Crewe Alexander Premier League Kicks Programme

The Premier League Kicks session on a Thursday evening is part of the Premier League Kicks programme where premier league clubs fund football at grass roots level. This session has the highest attendance out of all the sessions that Crewe Alex run locally. Students play games on the astro and we are invited to take part in Premier League Kicks tournaments to play against teams from Aston Villa, Coventry and West Brom to name a few. We came second in our group this year, which was a fantastic achievement. We also scored very highly in the Respect categories too. This is a very inclusive event and all students are encouraged to take part. They get the opportunity to play football with students they may not usually socialise with; in addition to skill development and

increased fitness, students benefit from greater socialisation leading to an increase in friendship groups.

C. Hall

Assistant SENDCo

Sporting Fixtures

Students from Years 7 – 11 have the opportunity to represent the school in fixtures in a wide variety of sports including football, basketball, badminton and many more. This gives students the chance to compete in sports they may not have access to outside of school but also to learn valuable skills. Students will also gain experience officiating in some of the fixtures.

L. Bergin

Subject Leader - PE



STEM Across Britain Roadshow

On Tuesday 22nd October 2024 MGA in collaboration with BAE Systems, The Royal Air Force and The Royal Navy delivered an engaging theatre roadshow about Science Electricity. The 50 minute performance was designed to inspire and engage our Years 7 and 8 students on the theme of electricity.

C. Howlett

Lead Practitioner of Science



Duke of Edinburgh Award

Duke of Edinburgh

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award has been launched with all pupils in Years 9 and 10, aiming to empower young people with essential life skills through adventurous expeditions and personal development activities. This exciting award continues the legacy of the Duke of Edinburgh himself, encouraging young people to step outside their comfort zones, develop resilience, and build a sense of community.

Since its inception in 1956, the D of E experience has inspired millions of young people across the globe to engage in personal growth and exploration. It challenges participants to undertake various activities—ranging from volunteering and physical challenges to skills development and adventurous journeys. Each endeavour fosters independence, teamwork, and leadership qualities that are invaluable in today's world.

Previous expeditions have showcased the profound impact of the D of E experience. Participants have trekked through rugged landscapes, navigated remote terrains, and faced unpredictable weather conditions, all while fostering teamwork and camaraderie. These journeys not only challenge physical endurance but also encourage young people to problem-solve and support one another, often resulting in lifelong friendships and unforgettable memories.

We are excited that so many pupils have opted to engage. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award continues to be a beacon of hope and opportunity, inspiring young adventurers to embark on journeys that will shape their futures. With its rich history of fostering growth, resilience, and adventure, the D of E stands ready to empower a new generation to explore, learn and thrive. The D of E Award has been up and running for 10 years at The Oaks Academy and we have organised expeditions to many

exciting places such as Llandegla, the Long Mynd, the Peckforton Hills, Delamere Forest and the Peak District. Our pupils are now beginning their training in navigation, camp craft and field cooking for new adventures next year.

J. Austin

Subject Leader - History

Calendar Dates

Here are some upcoming key dates:

- Tuesday 5th, Wednesday 6th November and Monday 11th November - Year 11 Hospitality and Catering Exams
- Thursday 7th November - Wednesday 27th November - Year 11 PPEs
- Monday 11th November - School Remembrance Service for Years 7 and 8
- Wednesday 27th November - SEND Parent Meetings
- Friday 6th December - A Christmas Carol Live Performance for Years 10 and 11
- Tuesday 10th December - Parent Forum Group
- Thursday 12th December - Don't Be A 'Scrooge' This Christmas Production
- Friday 13th December - SAC Day
- Friday 20th December - Last Day of Term
- Monday 6th January - INSET Day
- Tuesday 7th January - School Re-Opens for Students